COHESION AND SPORT TEAMS SUCCESS

By
Jenna Fitzgerald

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Approved by:

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(Faculty Mentor)

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(University Honors Director)

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Abstract

Cohesion can play multiple roles on a sports team allowing them to either flourish or fail during their season. The purpose of this research is to discuss how cohesion and conformity lead to a team's success and/or failure. By understanding cohesion, a sports team can become successful in their present and future endeavors. There are two types of cohesion, task and social; when each are used together it can help a sports team achieve success. Cohesion can promote conformity among sport teams. There are negative aspects of conformity such as groupthink that can inhibit a sports team's future success. Conformity can also have positive aspects such as teamthink. Teamthink is important because it can enhance a sports team effectiveness and performance. There are helping and hindering forces of cohesion that can propel a sports team forward or hold them back. Cohesion of a sports team is effective when all aspects of task cohesion, social cohesion, and teamthink are involved. Negative consequences occur when aspects of cohesion and conformity are out of balance.

Keywords: Conformity, task cohesion, social cohesion, teamthink, groupthink, sport teams

Introduction

Sports teams are subject to conformity because of the large group members and the need for members to fit in. Conformity is the result of a change in behavior or belief because of group pressure (Myers & Twenge, 2018, pg. 142). Group pressures can take different forms such as persuasion, teasing, or criticism. Persuasion comes from the pressure the group puts on individual members to make them agree with the group norms. Teasing happens when group members call out ideas or beliefs that do not follow the group norms. Criticism usually takes place when a member of the group has a different idea from everyone else. Conformity happens to someone because it is what the majority has already decided. A person conforms when they follow the standard rules or laws provided by a group. Conformity happens to a person who feels the need to "fit in". When a group develops social norms, everyone is expected to follow to ensure the integrity of the group.

Solomon Asch, a social psychologist, created a line experiment to test how far people would conform to a group. In his experiment, there were seven people in a row. Then the experimenter would ask the subjects which on the three comparison lines were closer to the standard line in height. Everyone would go around the room and answer out loud. At first everyone is agreeing on the correct lines that match the standard line. However, halfway through the experiment some subjects would purposely say the wrong comparison line and everyone else would follow. Asch was trying to see if on specific subject (the one who did not know that the others were told to say the wrong line) would conform to the rest of the group. This experiment is an example of normative social influence. This type of influence happens when people lead others to conform in order to be liked and accepted (Normative Social Influence, 2016). Asch

found that some people never conformed but three-quarters did at least once. (Myers & Twenge, 2018, pg. 130-131)

Sports teams also have a high ability of creating cohesion. Cohesion is a process that is seen through groups that stick together and remain united in its pursuit of its goal (Carron, Bray & Eys, 2002). There are two types of cohesion studied in social psychology, task and social cohesion. Task cohesion is when members of a group work together to achieve common team goals (Richardson, 2013). Social cohesion determines how much each member of a team likes each other and interact accordingly (Richardson, 2013). Each of these forces of cohesion work together to create teamwork in a sports team that helps them achieve success.

Sports teams often aim for the idea of cohesion and working together as one. However, most sports teams are likely to face conformity at one point or another. Conformity is often looked for the negative consequences it can have but without conformity a team could not exist. On the other hand, cohesion is often seen as a more positive outlook for team to achieve. Unfortunately, too much cohesion can lead to a standstill in a team's performance. This is because too much cohesion within a team can lead become difficult to maintain and may lead to groupthink which allows for less innovation (Wise, 2014).

<div align="center">Discussion</div>

Groupthink

Groupthink is the mode of thinking that persons engage in when trying to conform to other ideas and lose the ability of creative thoughts (Myers & Twenge, 2018, pg. 194). Groupthink comes from the negative effects of conformity. Conformity can create a lack of diversity. There are no new ideas when players are constantly conforming to what the majority is saying. Without new ideas, there may be no way of solving specific problem that can pop up on a

team. Groupthink focuses on how team decision making can be negative (Manz & Neck, 1995). This is because with groupthink there is a pressure and tendency to conform with one another. Groups that become contaminated by groupthink fail to critically address their topic which leads to inadequate alternatives (Manz & Neck, 1995). This occurs because of the self-censorship members put on themselves to avoid uncomfortable disagreements. The pressure to conform leads groupthink without innovative ideas because it may call into question the morality of the group.

Groupthink can also lead to another negative about conformity that it creates a blind belief system. This means that the players are allowing and trusting everything their coaches and management tell them to do. That means someone else has control over their team even though they might not know what is best for the team. This is seen when direct social pressure is placed on a member who argues against the group's shared beliefs (Manz & Neck,1995). Along with that, players of the team are left self-censored because their own thoughts deviate from the group and they are pressured to conform.

Groupthink can help create the emergence of self-appointed mind guards will not allow information from the outside that does not agree with the group ideas (Manz, & Neck, 1995). This leads to conformity that will result in nothing ever changing within a group. If every player on a sports team conforms to the rules and regulations, then ideas that are out of date will stay. It is important on a team to keep creating and updating the rules and regulations on how things are done but if they are always static then the team become predictable. Also, this conformity can hinder them in their next competition. Groupthink leads to collective efforts to rationalize decisions, stereotype views of outsiders, or shows other group leaders as weak or incompetent (Manz, & Neck, 1995). This can lead to a sports team not taking their next opponent seriously

and can result in a loss for the program. However, if a program is able to develop a team that uses teamthink instead of groupthink then the program can be consistently successful. Teamthink is the positive outlook on conformity and it aims to improve the effective decision making in self-managing teams (Manz & Neck, 1995). Teamthink focuses on teams at the individual level to improve their self-talk (inner dialogue), mental imagery, and beliefs and assumptions (Manz & Neck, 1995). This can allow a team to think on their own and not be afraid to share their ideas with the group. Teamthink can help sport teams enhance their group effectiveness and team performance. The team performance starts with the individual and how they view their role.

Teamthink

In teamthink it is important that individuals create inner leadership for themselves to help benefit the entire team. Inner leadership suggests that self-talk can serve as a self-influence tool for improving the personal effectiveness (Manz & Neck, 1995). Within a cohesive self-managing team, there is a tendency for members to put social pressure on other members who have views that deviate from group opinions (Manz & Neck, 1995). The process of inner leadership would allow players who do not conform to not be afraid to speak up for themselves and their ideas. The member of the team would then be able to benefit the team because of their new ideas. Teamthink allows for a fuller contribution of the knowledge and expertise of each team player (Manz, & Neck, 1995).

Another aspect of teamthink that is beneficial is the process of mental imagery. Mental imagery refers to imagining a performance of a task before the physical completion of it (Manz, & Neck, 1995). Sport teams are known to visualize the task at hand before the game is about to start. This helps player get into their full focused mode, so they are able to help the team in their

role. A work team can potentially enhance its performance through group mental imagery to

establish a common image of how best to address an existing challenge (Manz & Neck, 1995).

Teamthink allows groups to focus on the positive and not get caught up in the negative

challenges that they could be facing. These challenges can lead them to solving problems the

same way that has not worked before. Teamthink allows players to think on an individual level

and not allow the group to decide what their beliefs are.

Teamthink is important to the benefit of team success but without cohesion of a group

teamthink would not be possible. Cohesion is a process that is seen through groups that stick

together and remain united in its pursuit of its goal (Carron, Bray, & Eys, 2002). The generally

held assumption about team cohesion and team success is that greater team cohesiveness is

assumed to be related to greater team success (Carron, Bray, & Eys, 2002). Usually a team that is

confident in the knowledge of each other can help them create successes throughout their

competitive season.

Types of Cohesion

Cohesion has been considered one of the most important variables in the study of small

group dynamics such as sport teams (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012). There are forces that can

help drive a team to cohesion or block it. These forces are called helping forces or hindering

forces (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012). A helping force allows the group to further its success

while a hindering force may set the group back. These forces are what bind group cohesion and

keep the players together. Groups that possess strong unifying forces typically stick together over

time, where groups that do not possess a strong bond disband after a short period of time

(Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012). Group cohesion relies on the individual's attraction to the task

that the group is performing (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012).

Task cohesion may be the trigger that initially ties the player to the team and want to perform. While social cohesion comes later when the individual is concerned about the quality of interpersonal relations (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012). There are three identified influences of cohesion. The influences are group cohesion resulted from a sense of belonging, stem from interdependent work with required coordination, and group cohesiveness developed from both interpersonal and group attraction (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012). Task cohesion and social cohesion are an important part of developing leadership among teams.

There are many leadership factors that act as important interpersonal mediators of task and social cohesion (Jowett & Chaundy, 2004). The leadership in sport teams comes from a coach who is training the team daily. Coach leadership is defined as a coach's behavioral processes that influence team members toward performance accomplishments (Jowett & Chaundy, 2004). The goal of the coach is to individually improve each member of the team and to make each member work together cohesively. The interactions between a coach their athletes are associated with performance of the athletes' sense of belongingness to the team (Jowett & Chaundy, 2004). The coach must be able to properly train the team while also providing specific behaviors that the team must follow. Higher levels of coaches' training and instruction, social support, positive feedback, and democratic decision-making help explain the relationship with task cohesion (Jowett & Chaundy 2004). Social cohesion was linked to coach social support behaviors, as well as training and instruction behaviors (Jowett & Chaundy, 2004). Social cohesion of a coach relies on how well the coach is trusted by the team members and if what she/he is training has produced in positive results.

Team task cohesiveness are consistent among members of the same team (Carron, Bray, & Eys, 2002). This can connect to conformity that creates a fair distribution of the workload. On

a sports team, everyone has a role that must be executed properly to succeed at the task at hand.

If one player does not perform their task, then the chances of failure can increase. Just like self-

managing teams, sport teams involve members with different skills and experiences (Manz &

Neck, 1995). On sport teams, each player has a specific task that they are best at performing.

These different skills and experiences allow for the team to come together and solve problems

(Manz, & Neck, 1995). A sports team works on their specific role to insure the greater good of

the team. Every player has a part that they must contribute and carry out so that their team can

have a possibility of reaching its goals. Self-managing team, such as sport teams, empower

players to have an increase control over the decisions of their own behavior (Manz & Neck,

1995).

Cohesion of a group may be influenced by the amount of conformity the group provides

to group norms (Prapavessis & Carron, 1997). High cohesive groups have been proven put more

pressure on members toward group norms than did low cohesive groups (Prapavessis & Carron,

1997). This means that conformity within a sports group can influence how well that team works

together. Group norms also play a role in conformity among sport teams. Individuals who

understand and accept the group norms are accepted into the group, while individuals who do not

accept the group norms never become part of the group (Prapavessis & Carron, 1997). Norms

contribute to group function because sport teams have these norms set as rules and regulations.

Sport teams can benefit from the positives of conformity. One positive that conformity can create

for a team is that players need to conform for everything to run smoothly. Players on the team

must follow the rules and regulations of practice and the games to allow for the team to grow and

develop. This conformity leads to self-managing teams which has advantages such as increased

quality and productivity, and a better environment (Manz & Neck, 1995). The rules and regulations of a team are the group norms that players conform to follow.

Cohesion is a mix of positives and negatives on an organizational team. There can be many issues that arise on a team because of goals, roles, conflicting team membership, or procedures (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012). However, on a sports team these conflicts seem to disappear because of the highly defined structure of a team and how they operate. Group cohesion in sports can be critical when a team needs a synchronized response. Cohesion in a sport team is aimed at the ability to learn about each other to enhance the overall performance (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012). Teams must be connected with their coach through strategy, must make game-time decisions, and benefit from conformity in order to benefit from cohesion (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012). Cohesion of a team leads to better development of a team overall.

Group cohesion if implemented properly can create a sport team that can focus on maximizing team member effort, skill, and team-level coordination and strategy (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012). To develop cohesion for a sports team a coach can work on developing team members. This means that a coach needs to create an environment that involves building a collective identity. Once that is established then a coach must make it easy for team members to be close together, which can be done by focusing on similarities among team member. Lastly a coach should put a positive spin on the team's performance and challenge the team in new and various ways. (Pescosolido & Saavedra, 2012) If implemented successfully then a team may be able to achieve its goals during its season of competition. Also, the team may be able to solve problems collectively as they arise.

Individual Performance within a Team

A team is made up of many individuals working together towards a specific goal. For a team to their most successful that means that the individuals have to me at their best. There are many components to having an individual member of a team to enhance their performance. The strategies to enhance performance include self-talk and mental imagery. However, strategies vary at different levels of competition such as youth versus adult. Enhancing performance of an individual can help lead to further team success. As the individual become more advanced in their sport they can begin to benefit the team in different areas of the game.

Enhancing performance

Enhancing performance for athletes can consist of mental strategies. The strategies include self-talk, and mental imagery; which require ultimate focus from the athlete. Each method can be utilized by the athlete to help them overcome obstacles and achieve their full potential. Sports psychologist can assist athletes achieve their full potential by guiding them in cognitive behavioral techniques. The techniques are used to promote the control of one's internal mental and emotional processes (Schwanhausser, 2009). Every technique can be modified and for youth sports it is important to have an approach that is naturally occurring. One technique is acceptance-based approaches which are used to enhance self-awareness of internal experiences from a nonjudgmental stance (Schwanhausser, 2009). Approaches give athletes ideas on how to view specific aspects of their competition and come up with the best solution to solve them. This allows an athlete to solve any issues they have in their performance.

Youth Athletes

Youth athletes can benefit from the acceptance-based techniques because it allows them to identify the values in their participation. With identifying these values allows the athlete to

improve on their motivation and personal development through sport. Many acceptance-based

models have demonstrated efficacy in improving aspects of self-regulation and psychological

well-being (Schwanhausser, 2009). This identification allows the athlete to focus on their

individual needs to help create an action plan for enhancing their performance. Through mindful

acceptance rather than control youth athletes can develop task relevant attention to their own best

interests. These means that the youth athletes leave their thoughts and emotions behind when in

the process of enhancing performance. The acceptance-based approach focuses on the

enhancement of awareness, willingness, and attention to task relevant stimuli. This allows the

athlete to not engage in self-focused attention which creates values for themselves to follow.

Having youth athletes focus on the team rather than themselves helps with the future

development of characteristics from sports. The focus on the team rather than themselves also

enhancing their ability to be part of a cohesive team.

Adult Athletes

The importance of psychological skills training in athletic performance is use often in

elite sports. Elite sport focuses on the adult in an amateur, semi-professional, or professional

league. The individual athlete in a high intensity sport has massive pressure on them in a limited

amount of time. Psychological skill training for individual athletes use skills to help enhance

performance, increase enjoyment, or achieve self-satisfaction (Birrer & Morgan, 2010). This is a

goal oriented, planned, and controlled model that allows athletes to achieve logical skills rapidly.

In sport psychology interventions, the basic four techniques used are imagery, goal-setting, self-

talk, and physical relaxation techniques (Birrer & Morgan, 2010). With these technique the

athlete can learn to enhance their performance to help their team be more successful. These four

basic techniques are the general stepping stones to the larger and more complex psychological skills of an athlete; such as cognitive reconstructing.

For an athlete to see positive advancements in their performance, a sport psychologist must know the demands of the athlete. Demands are different for every athlete and every sport; the basic techniques will not benefit an athlete because they are too generalized. The identification of a psychological demands on a specific sport can be hard to distinguish. There are multiple models that discuss the ideas around the most important demands for a sport. These models include ideas such as, continuity of impact, training years, injury risk, motivation, and self-constructs. Each model presents a different problem for athletes to face when trying to enhance their performance. The importance of finding the correct technique for an athlete is crucial because each athlete presents different needs to enhance their performance. Enhancement of their performance is important because then their team can become more successful on the field.

Self-Talk

Self-talk is used by sports psychologist to encourage the performance of the athlete. The benefits of self-talk can be seen in the fundamental principles of cognitive behavioral therapies (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011). The treatments of these therapies aim to change an individual's thoughts, interpretations, and behaviors (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011). The changes an individual can make will help them motivate themselves and realize their true potential. Benefits also include enhancing their performance on the field. This will benefit their team as well because if their performance is grater on the field then so is their teams performance.

There is a treatment that was developed within the cognitive behavioral therapies called, self-instructional training. This framework of treatment has been described as a form of self-

management (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011). Self-instructional training can help regulate behavioral performance by addressing statements to oneself. The statements influence the individuals' attentional and appraisal processes (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011). This framework continues to facilitate new skill development and enhancing performance responses. Self-instructional strategies have flourished into sports psychology. These strategies are referred to as "self-talk interventions" and aim to facilitate learning and enhancing performance through stimulation of appropriate responses (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011).

Through positive self-statements and self-instructions on task performance an athlete can provide themselves confidence to perform at their highest level. Self-talk can be implemented on any level to improve performance. In a study, by Van Raalte et al., students used a positive self-talk cue, "I can do it", to perform better on dart throwing accuracy (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011). The group that uses the self-talk cue performed better on accuracy task than the control group. There are two types of self-talk, motivational and instructional. Motivational self-talk is all about cues that aim at psyching up, maximizing effort, building confidence, and creating positive moods (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011). Instructional self-talk includes cues about focusing or directing attention and providing instruction about technique, strategy, or kinesthetics attributes of a skill (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011).

There was another self-talk training study implemented in elite sprinters in the 100-meter race. A race plan was developed to use appropriate cues for the three segments of the race (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011). There were three cue words (push, heel, and claw). From 0-30 meters the cue word "push" was used to for the acceleration phase. The second cue word "heel" was used during the 30-60 meters for the maximum velocity phase. The third cue word "claw" is used during the last 60-100 meters of the race for speed endurance. This intervention resulted in

reduction in times in comparison with the baseline of the elite sprinters. (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011)

Self-talk can help athletes by enhancing attentional focus, increasing confidence, regulating effort, controlling cognitive and emotional reactions, and triggering automatic execution (Hatzigeorgiadis et al, 2011). Self-talk allows athletes to become more positive minded. These positive aspects can greatly enhance their performance because they are unintentionally boosting their confidence. With an athlete's performance enhancing that means the team's performance is also enhancing. At the sport team's new level of play they are bound to be more successful that when that individual athlete was not at their peak performance.

Mental Imagery

With the competitive nature of an athlete's world they need to utilize resources available to them to help enhance their performance. Mental imagery is one resource that benefits athletes in sport through motivational and cognitive function (Mills et al, 2000). There are two sub categories under each function of mental imagery. The two subcategories of each mental imagery function are; specific and general. Cognitive specific imagery is the rehearsal of motor skills while cognitive general imagery is the rehearsal of strategies of play (Mills et al., 2000). Motivational specific imagery is goal oriented while motivational general imagery is imagining being mentally tough, in control, and handling difficult situations (Mills et al., 2000). Imagery for athletes is used to enhance their performance in competition rather than training. This leads to a better performance on the field and a more successful team.

Motivational imagery is a focus on enhancing an athlete's performance psychologically, emotionally, physically, technically, and tactically (Taylor, 2012). Imagery allows an athlete to do more than just visualize what they want to accomplish come competition. It is a matter of

perspective, control, multiple senses, and speed (Taylor, 2012). Perspective in imagery can take two different forms. The first form involves seeing yourself from inside your body looking out, as if you were performing your sport (internal perspective) (Taylor, 2012). The second is an external perspective that involves seeing yourself from outside your body looking down (Taylor, 2012). Athlete's use the method that comes most natural to them, but it allows them to focus in the moment of their action. Control is the next step in imagery that allows an athlete to imagine what they want to imagine. If something goes wrong in their image, then that can reveal a lack of confidence in their ability to perform. It is important that if a mistake occurs then the athlete must rewind the imagery in their head and continue it until they get it right. Not fixing the mistake could negatively impact the athlete's confidence and therefore performance (Taylor, 2012).

Multiple senses take imagery from just visual to an actual sport experience. Multi-sensory reproduction allows the athlete to duplicate the sights, sounds, physical sensations, thoughts, and emotions that they would experience in competition (Taylor, 2012). This is the most powerful part of mental imagery because it creates feeling in an athlete's body. The sensations that are created in the imagery allow an athlete to take steps to either fix, relax, or understand the sensations. The last step to motivational imagery is speed. This is the ability to adjust the speed of the imagery allowing the athlete to focus on specific parts (Taylor, 2012). Such as, slowing part of the image down to focus on technique and then an athlete can speed the image up to see it in 'real-time'. Motivational imagery is used to help the athlete's ability to see and correct visually what they are doing wrong. However, the focus of motivational imagery is to improve the confidence of the athlete which enhances their performance.

Athletes use mental imagery to promote their self-confidence. This confidence then allows them to be more successful during their competitions. The enhancement of an athlete's confidence can improve their athletic performance. Measures in self-confidence for athlete's is called sport confidence. The State Sport Confidence Inventory found that athletes with high self-confidence used more motivational general imagery and have better visual imagery than those who were low in sport confidence (Mills et al., 2000). The conclusion of this inventory stated that if an athlete wants to develop, maintain, or regained sport confidence then the athlete should imagine being confident (Mills et al., 2000). Sport confidence is a strength of belief but does not describe what the certainty is about. The athlete can use self-confidence to believe in their ability on the field; this is turn helps them reach their peak performance level.

Self-efficacy is coined as a better definition because it is the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce specific attainments (Mills et al., 2000). Sport confidence can be further explained through self-efficacy because it influences behaviors such as choice, performance, effort, strategy choice, goal choice, and goal commitment (Mills et al., 2000). This understanding of confidence allows athletes to benefit from imagery. With more self-efficacy an athlete is better off knowing they are capable of the images they create in their mind. Athletes with higher self-efficacy are shown to perform better than those who have low self-efficacy.

The study done by Millis, Munroe, and Hall concluded that athletes who are high in self-efficacy use all functions of motivational imagery more than athletes in low self-efficacy. This shows the use of motivational imagery and the positive affect it can have on an athlete, enhancing their performance. However, this imagery is not as effective unless the athlete is confident in their abilities to succeed. Sport confidence is what allows the athlete to believe the

mental picture in their head and allow them to achieve that goal. Without sports confidence the motivational imagery will not be as successful. For an individual athlete confidence is important because it helps enhance their performance. Their performance being enhanced positively affects the team because it increases their performance and chances for the team to be more successful.

Negative Mental Side

The mind and the body are inherently connected. It is known in psychology that our attitudes and emotions have a direct effect on our bodies at the physiological level (Gee, 2010). There are also behavioral responses that are chosen along with the effort put towards their execution (Gee, 2010). An athlete's performance is reliant on these attitudes, emotions, and behaviors. If an athlete cannot control their own behaviors of the mind, then they will not execute their skills at the level they are capable of. There many behaviors that have the potential to negatively impact an athlete perform at their highest level. An athlete affected by a negative mental state it can cause and issue within the team. It all begins with the thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs of that athlete.

An athlete's psychological state can act in a counterproductive manner in the form of anxiety to deplete their performance. Anxiety comes in many forms, but elevated anxiety is a direct cause of physiological changes that can impede an athlete's performance (Gee, 2010). Elevated anxiety can impair fine motor functioning, decision making abilities, and causes muscles to become tenser (Gee, 2010). All these effects can negatively impact sport-specific behaviors. For an athlete their ability in competition is always in a fluid automated manner. With elevated anxiety an athlete's automated manner is disrupted.

Anxiety can affect the athlete's thoughts with self-doubt. This can influence there in-game decision making (Gee, 2010). Athletes who doubt themselves may elect to pass instead of

shooting the ball out of fear of missing or miss relevant external cues (Gee, 2010). Since their

attentional focus is directed internally they cannot focus on their competition. An athlete not

focused on their competition affects the entire team. One member of the team that loses focused

means that the team now has a weak spot. The athlete can then be targeted as a weak point from

the other team and be exploited. This leads to the athlete's team being less successful and

decreased the performance of the team overall. To combat this apprehension of self-doubt and

athlete must have the ability to change cognitions while competing (Gee, 2010). Rational

emotive therapy can be used as a strategy to help the athlete interpret situations.

Rational emotive theory is used by sport psychologist to allow the athlete to interpret a

competitive situation from a rational grounded perspective (Gee, 2010). Through this therapy

athletes learn their self-worth is not tied to the outcome of their athletic contest (Gee, 2010). The

therapy teaches that even though winning and losing for an athlete is very important, losing does

not represent the end of the road. Accepting this can help the athlete overcome their fear of

failure. The process of an athlete overcoming this fear is through the restructuring of their

thought patterns (Gee, 2010). Self-talk, thought stopping, centering, and reframing strategies can

change an athlete's anxiety. Strategies such as these are used to help an athlete replace thoughts

with more positive and affirming statements (Gee, 2010). This allows for a positive cognitive

mindset and leads to the potential of them enhancing their performance. This in turn leads to the

potential of the team having their performance increase which then leads to a more successful

team.

Measuring Cohesion

Cohesion is essential for team effectiveness, performance, and success. The measurement

of cohesion is tricky and hard to follow. Since cohesion is inconsistently defined and measured it

makes it difficult to compare findings across studies. In a study by Eduardo Salas, Rebecca Grossman, Ashley Hughes, and Chris Coultas the measuring of team cohesion can become more cohesive, reliable, and significant. The study defines cohesion as the shared bond/attraction that drives team members to stay together and want to work together (Salas et al. 2015). Cohesion is an umbrella term that encompasses many different definitions that complicates being able to measure it. Another aspect that makes it difficult to measure is that it also can be measured at the team and individual level. Lastly, cohesion happens overtime among teams so the ability to measure it becomes even more difficult because of the time dedicated to it.

The study conducted a literature search for peer-reviewed articles and included ones that were empirical and explored the relationship between cohesion and performance. Once the articles were discovered they qualitatively coded them to extract information based on whether studies established relationships between cohesion and performance. The study recognizes the multidimensional construct of cohesion and how others decide to define cohesion as unidimensional anyways. For cohesion to be measured on one term, the divergent definitions and dimensions had to be identified. Unfortunately, this is not the end of issues that come with trying to measure cohesion.

There are many issues that come with trying to measure cohesion consistently. One critical issue is when measuring and understanding cohesion as a multilevel assessment (Salas et al. 2015). The articles used in this study reported cohesion was defined as a team variable in 37% of measured relationships (Salas et al. 2015). While other articles (14%) chose to identify cohesion as a multilevel variable (Salas et al. 2015). For cohesion to be measure effectively to help enhance team performance there needs to be less ambiguity. Strategies for measuring cohesion seem to favor team-level because it yields more significant findings. However, if more

research is done at the multilevel strategy then cohesion can be measure both at the individual and team level since both play a significant factor in performance enhancement.

Cohesion is a major contributor when it comes to team success. Teams are constantly looking for a competitive advantage and with cohesion that can be found. Cohesion's inconsistent measurement has long effective the research that identifies how important it is to a team's success (Salas et al. 2015). By understanding that cohesion is a multidimensional construct it can be determined what factors of cohesion should be most focused on in measurement. Task and social cohesion should be prioritized in the measurement and research because of the bond between teammates. While cohesion is multilevel, the research should stay focused on the team-level because that is where cohesion seems to operate most consistently. However, the individual level of cohesion should still be recognized because they might warrant different analytical techniques. A more effective way to measure cohesion is needed but the study started a conversation about the ways in which it can be measured most effectively to enhance a team's performance.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

Conformity and cohesion have a majority of the effect on how sport teams function collectively. However, there are multiple factors that must be considered when observing a sports team on their success rate. Groupthink and teamthink are only a few aspects that can greatly affect the success of a team. It is all about balance when it comes to creating a team that works cohesively together. Not enough conformity and nothing will get done; not enough cohesion and the team dynamic will fall apart. Too much cohesion can lead to a negative about conformity. This negative about conformity is that it creates players that cannot think for themselves. Every player that plays on a sports team needs to be able to think on their feet in any

given situation because all games are unpredictable. However, if players are constantly doing as they are told then they will not be able to make an instant decision during the play of the game.

Sport teams have many obstacles that they must endure for their team to be deemed as successful. Throughout the sport teams season they are faced with adversity and hardships. The team must have built a cohesive environment that allows them to break through obstacles and sustain the same goal set at the beginning of the year. The cohesion of a sport team relies heavily on the ability of the coach and individual players. The coach is someone who creates an environment where goals are recognized on a team level. These goals are what motivate a team to be successful and perform at their best. The individuals on a team have to be able to perform at their highest level throughout the season. This means individual players must focus on enhancing their performance through self-talk and mental imagery to benefit the team. The individuals on the team are also responsible for keeping each other together. Many players make up a team but with focused goals and team cohesion the team can enhance their performance throughout the season.

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